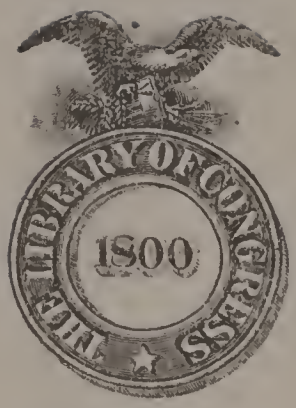
CHINOOK

The Cinnamon Cub

ALLEN CHAFFEE



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"Now swim!" commanded their mother.

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CHINOOK

THE CINNAMON CUB

BY

ALLEN CHAFFEE

Author of "SITKA, The Snow Baby," "FUZZY WUZZ, The Little Brown Bear," "TWINKLY EYES, The Little Black Bear," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY

PETER DA RU

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FOREWORD

Here are stories of the wild life of the rich woods of Oregon.

In following the adventures of Chinook, the cinnamon bear and his sister Snookie (western prototypes of the jolly black bears of New England), and of the Ranger's Boy, the child will learn of tree mice and burrow mice, and of the little mountain pack-rats who build tepees, of those giant mousers, the bobcat and the California mountain lion, to say nothing of the bat, pika, elk, and "snowshoe rabbit," and the ever present Douglas squirrel.

He will wander through forests of spruce and fir to the snow-clad peaks, and back along cascading rivers, as the two cubs learn of the world in which they live.

The Literary Review of the New York *Evening Post* has said of a black bear book:

"The little bear will delight all children just because he is a ball of mischief, sagacity, awkwardness—a real bear. Allen Chaffee's books are unusual for vivacity, humor, and truth to the characters of the no longer dumb beasts."

THE PUBLISHERS.

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CHINOOK
THE CINNAMON CUB

CHAPTER I

A BOY AND A BEAR

THE golden dawn of a June day in the Oregon woods streamed in slant bars between the tall trunks of the yellow pines, and into the rocky gulch where Mother Brown Bear had her den.

Dewdrops gleamed like diamonds on every flower and fern and spider web that bordered the cascading creek. Mrs. Tree Mouse peered with bright, beady eyes as a small, roguish face peeked from the cave mouth. Then out into the warming sunshine burst two of the most roly-poly little brown bears that she had ever seen. For a few minutes they wrestled like two boys, standing up on their short hind legs to pom-

mel one another, or galloping about in a game of tag. Their small, flat feet made prints in the soft earth for all the world like the prints of a human child's foot, and their black eyes twinkled with fun. It was Chinook and his sister Snookie, their soft fur gleaming cinnamon-brown in the sunshine.

Then the huge form of Mother Brown Bear came lumbering through the cave mouth, and with a soft rumble deep down in her chest she bade them follow her. She made her way lumberingly down over the crags and fallen logs to a stump where she might breakfast on a great cluster of yellow mushrooms. The cubs had had their milk in the cave, but they always wanted to sample everything their mother ate, and they went scrambling after her as fast as their short legs and fat sides would let them.

The canyon in which they had been born that spring was a wild mass of tumbled rocks and mossy boulders where, years before, a landslide or an earthquake might have tossed them. Just below their cave lay a tangle of

fallen tree trunks piled crisscross, and overgrown with a jungle of the mammoth ferns that throve in that moist soil. Just now these logs were encrusted with the brilliant-hued mushrooms that Mother Brown Bear loved. Later there would be blueberries and wild blackberries where now pale blossoms shone in the sunlight. In the stream to which their cascading streamlet led were trout, and in the great river beyond were salmon who came from the sea to lay their eggs in the gravel. On the mountain-sides about them, where the wind-swept junipers twisted like gnomes above the rocky ledges, lived burrow mice and wood rats who would furnish good sport when the berries failed. It was a splendid bit of wilderness on which Mother Brown Bear had staked out her claim, and the cubs were eager to be taken exploring.

They had nearly reached a point where the huge fallen trunks, propped breast high to a man on their broken branches, threw long black shadows along the ground in

which the cubs could hide in case of danger, when Mother Brown Bear sounded a note of warning deep down in her throat.

Someone was coming along the trail. With the fur bristling along the back of her neck, she rose to her hind legs and listened, wriggling her nose this way and that to detect what manner of creature it could be. He was certainly a noisy animal, for the fallen branches cracked under his feet. That meant that he was without fear. He must be large and ferocious. But the wind blew in the wrong direction to carry the message to her nose.

Chinook also rose to his hind legs ready to fight, and he too peered this way and that, sniffing and cocking his ears in his effort to see what it was. Snookie, though she reared up in a pose that looked like fight, preferred to take her stand behind her mother, and while Chinook genuinely hoped there would be a good scrap, Snookie privately wished there wouldn't. For Snookie

was the smaller cub, and in her bouts with her brother she always seemed to get the worst of it.

"Whoof! Who is it?" asked Mother Brown Bear under her breath. *"Whoof!"* echoed her small son aggressively, and "Whoof!" said Snookie in a wee, small voice.

Then along the trail came someone attired in blue overalls and a wide straw hat, who walked on his hind legs like a bear and carried a fishy smelling rod over his shoulder. It was the Ranger's Boy, who meant to surprise his mother with a string of trout for breakfast.

"G-r-r!" warned Mother Brown Bear. "Don't come any nearer, or I'll do something dreadful to you." For she was always afraid that harm would come to her wee, fuzzy children. The Ranger was in charge of these woods, and he and the man cub had never harmed her, though of course, she told herself, she was large enough to

have fought off a whole family of rangers. But with her babies it was different. They had come into the world soft and helpless, and it would still be many moons before they could look out for themselves. "G-r-r!" she warned the Boy again. But he had stopped in his tracks to stare at them.

With Chinook it was far different. He felt so fine and fit that he just itched for a fight with someone beside Snookie, and he growled a "Come on!" deep down in his furry chest.

"Hello, there!" exclaimed the Boy softly from the far side of the windfall, his eyes laughing as he saw the two new little bears standing there ready for fight. He knew better than to come any nearer their mother, but he also knew there was no need to run away, so long as he kept his distance. "You're a funny rascal," he told Chinook. "A regular scrapper, aren't you? I wouldn't mind making friends with you some day," and his voice was reassuring. Chinook un-

derstood the Boy's tone, and his quiet attitude, better than the words.

"I'll fight you any time," growled Chinook, and he struck an even saucier pose, his little black eyes twinkling roguishly.

CHAPTER II

THE CUBS LEARN TO SWIM

"G-R-R! Better go on!" warned Mother Brown Bear, and at that, the Ranger's Boy thought best to march down the trail. But some day, he promised himself, he was going to see more of that bear cub. As for Chinook, he was consumed with a great curiosity to know more of the man cub who walked on his hind legs all the way.

What an interesting world it was that lay all about him! First there had been the sour-tasting ants and buttery grubs that his mother was always finding under the fallen logs and boulders. Then there was Douglas, the red-brown squirrel he could never catch, but who was always running right across his trail till it seemed the easiest thing in the world to nab him, only that some way Doug-

las always managed to leap beyond reach just in the nick of time. Douglas claimed that the woods belonged to him and that the bears were trespassing on his domain, and from the safety of some limb too small for a bear cub, he would hurl jeers and insulting challenges at Chinook.

"That's because he's afraid of us," Mother Brown Bear told her son. "Douglas is bluffing. He knows that bears are fond of having squirrel for supper."

For a while after the Boy had passed out of sight, the cubs were allowed to practise walking on the fallen logs. When they fell off, they were so fat and so round, and the moist ground so soft, that it did not hurt them. Besides, the moment they felt themselves slipping, they could put out their claws and cling to the rough bark. By and by the Boy returned along the way he had come, but by this time Mother Brown Bear had led the cubs far up the gulch to where a spot of sunshine invited a cat nap. Even as she dozed, she kept one eye half open, and

one ear cocked for the slightest sound beyond the calling of nestling birds and the barking and scrambling of noisy Douglas and his family, and the tinkling of the wee cascades that led to the river. The cubs rolled and tumbled over her, or coasted off her huge back, boxed and wrestled and played hide and seek, or came up to pat her huge, furry face with little love pats.

It was a warm day, and when she had had her nap and the cubs their milk, and a nap of their own, and the sun threw her shadow directly beneath her, she decided that it would be a good time to teach them to swim. For woods babies were likely any time to fall into the water, and if there were any possible way of getting into trouble, Chinook, especially, was sure to find it.

"Come!" she bade them with an affectionate soft rumble deep in her throat, and she led the way down to the little river and on to where it spread out shallowly over gravelly banks and the sun took some of the chill out of the water. Mother Brown Bear waded

in slowly. Chinook tried first one fore paw, then the other, in this strange new element that was not air, though one could see straight through it to the pebbly ground beneath. Snookie backed off, whimpering. "Come on!" commanded Mother Brown Bear. "Follow me."

Chinook, less fearful than his sister, but still wary, because of the coldness and the strange wetness of it, followed for a few steps, then ran splashing back to shore, where he stood shaking first one foot, then another with a shower of sparkling drops.

"Snookie, come here!" ordered Mother Brown Bear. But Snookie only whimpered. "Chinook, show your sister that you are not afraid," she coaxed, and Chinook, with a show of bravado, waded in. But the instant the water was deep enough to start lifting him off his feet, he turned in a panic and again dashed madly back to solid ground.

"Snookie!" called Mother Brown Bear, wading back to shore, "climb on my back."

This the smaller cub willingly did. She liked to ride on Mother's back, hanging on to the long fur with her handlike paws. "Come, Chinook!" and Mother Brown Bear waded back into the river with both youngsters gleefully taking a ride. As she went in deeper, Snookie looked back at the receding shore line, and clung faster to her mother's fur. Still deeper went their chariot, till at last it reached deep water. "Now swim!" commanded their mother, and with a suddenness that unseated them, she made a dive and shook them from her back, then turned and paddled to shore without once heeding Snookie's strangling squeal for help.

The cubs naturally struggled wildly to find a footing, and as they pawed and clawed about, their legs worked the same way as when they ran, which was just the way they ought to have worked. Then they discovered that by spreading their legs even wider and scooping at the water with their paws, they could do better still. Their vigorous

paddling not only served to keep their noses above water, but Chinook, less frightened than his twin, turned his eyes to where his mother stood waiting on the river bank, and struck out towards her with all his might. Snookie, seeing his wee stub of a tail near her jaws, grabbed hold and let him tow her, and soon they had their feet once more on the gravelly shore. Puffing and panting, and dripping chilly drops, the cubs would have rested, but that Mother Brown Bear set off on a gallop into the woods.

"Wait for me!" squealed Snookie.

"Wait!" panted Chinook, and the cubs galloped after her. Why was Mother so unkind today?

CHAPTER III

THE CALIFORNIA LION

MOTHER BROWN BEAR had a reason for running away and making the cubs follow, for by the time she was willing to stop, their shivering bodies were all in a glow of warmth, and what with a few good shakings of her wet fur, and a little help from their mother's rough tongue, and the sunny June breeze, they were soon dry and fluffy, and ready for anything.

The next day Mother Brown Bear again took them swimming, and they found they liked it. The day after, she decided to go fishing, for the streams were full of trout, and she loved trout even better than the roots and mushrooms that she could find near home. This time she towed the cubs across the river. Chinook took her stub of a tail in his teeth to help him as he swam, and Snookie took his tail.

When they had reached the riffles where the fishing was good, Mother Brown Bear simply stood there like a floating log with one barbed paw held under water, ready to spear any fish that swam too near. With her sharp claws she could impale the slippery fellows, and toss them to shore, where the cubs sat watching. They still drank milk, but with their sharp little teeth they sampled everything their mother ate, to see what it was like. They were having great fun this afternoon. In the clear water they could see the shining bodies of the finny ones darting along, and taking Mother Black Bear for just a big brown log. Then she would send a fish flapping to shore, and the cubs would try to catch the slippery fellow.

The three bears had started late that day, and it was getting on towards sunset. The high peaks to the westward had already cut off the ruddy globe of light and left deep shadows creeping upon them, when Mother Brown Bear, crunching her fish on the river bank, caught a strange message on the wind

that swept downstream. Her nose began to wriggle.

"What is it?" questioned Chinook softly through his nose.

"Hush!" breathed Mother Brown Bear, and the fur rose along her spine, as her nerves tensed with anger. The cubs, feeling her mood, crept closer, the fur rising frightened along their tiny spines.

Away down along the river bank a moving gray-brown shadow stirred the salmonberry bushes and made a faint lapping sound as it drank at a pool. As the night wind blew to their inquiring nostrils, it telegraphed that here was a huge foe. It told Mother Brown Bear distinctly that down there, fishing, was Cougar, the California mountain lion, most dreaded of all her enemies. She might have stood him off in single combat, had he ever been so rash as to attack a grown bear, but here were the cubs, so little and helpless! The only reason Cougar would ever have for coming near would be if he wanted bear cub for breakfast.

Many moons ago, while exploring a distant mountain range, she had seen him lying in wait for rabbits, and when she located her den in the gulch, she had supposed that he still lived many miles from the spot. But here he was, as she could see by peering from behind a boulder, crouched on the shelving bank of the river with one paw dangling, barbed and ready to spear a fish. Perhaps it had been a poor rabbit year and he had moved into her territory. That would never do! From now on, she must keep close watch of the cubs. Perhaps he need never learn that she had these furry children to protect. If they went quietly now downstream, with the wind blowing from him to them, they might cross the river lower down. Then if he should cross their trail, he would lose their scent at the point where they entered the water. But once let the giant cat learn of the den by the cascades, and he would be watching it, like a cat at a mouse hole, for the first moment when she had to leave her children unprotected.

Now a bear, for all his weight, can pad along as softly as any other mouser when he wants to, and this time, at least, the little family got safely home without discovery. But when the great, tawny-brown cat had caught his supper and eaten it, he decided to see what might be farther downstream, and thus he happened upon the bear-scented foot-prints that the three had left behind them.

"Ah, ha!" sniffed Cougar, who was longer than a man is tall. "Juicy, tender young bear cubs! Just wait till I can catch one! What a feast it will be!" and he licked his whiskered lips in pleased anticipation.

But when he came to the point where the bears had crossed the river, he lost their trail, and though he sniffed about for a long time, he could not find what had become of them. Cats hate getting wet, and he wouldn't have swum the river except in a real emergency.

Now it happened that the Ranger was after that very mountain lion, for Cougar

had been killing elk and deer, and these were Uncle Sam's woods, where deer are protected except for a little while each fall. But when Cougar had moved from his old den on the other side of the mountain, the Ranger had lost track of him.

One day, though, the Ranger's Boy, on his way over the Pass with a pack-horse to the Logging Camp where they bought flour and coffee, heard something that sounded almost like a man sawing wood. It was away off up the mountainside. The Boy listened, and if his mother hadn't expected him back by supper time, he would have climbed the slope to see who it could be. If he had done so, he wouldn't have caught so much as a glimpse of the purring lion, who would have run at the first whiff of a human being. But if the Boy had had his father's pocket telescope with him, he would have seen, stretched out flat on a shelving rock ledge, which his fur almost matched, the long, slender, pantherlike animal, as heavy as a grown man, with his small head nodding drowsily

in the sunshine because he had been up all night exploring. And in his dreams Cougar licked his lips, for he was dreaming of nosing out the den where Mother Brown Bear had her cubs.

CHAPTER IV

THE HOME IN THE SQUIRREL'S NEST

DOUGLAS, the squirrel, whose fur just matched the red-brown tree trunks, was as saucy as his eastern cousins, the red squirrels. He had been named after a famous explorer, just as Chinook was named for the Indians who lived in that part of Oregon.

It used to seem to the little bear as if the squirrel took delight in teasing him, while so surely as Chinook tried to slip away and hide from his mother, Douglas was sure to spy out his hiding place from some branch overhead, and chatter and scream about it for all the woods to hear. Then with a "catch-me-if-you-can" sort of challenge, he would go whisking almost under the cub's nose, and away. Chinook would go racing after him, for he, as well as Douglas, could

climb trees as easily as a cat. His sharp claws clung to the bark even better than Mother Brown Bear's. But always the squirrel was too quick for him. Then when the little bear would give it up and back his way to the ground, Douglas would come and perch on a limb just out of reach, and hurl saucy threats at him, or race up and down and around the tree trunk, his tail jerking with his wrath. "These are *my* woods," he was always asserting. "My pine cones! My mushrooms! Go away!" At which Chinook would retort: "I'll eat you alive, if you don't look out!"

Then Douglas would seat himself away out on some slender branch where Chinook could not have reached him, had he tried, and taking a pine cone up in his handlike paws, he would nibble it around and around, and eat the delicious kernels, while the little bear's mouth watered for a taste, then throw the empty cone down on his head.

The day after their fishing trip, Mother Brown Bear decided that if Cougar was any-

where about, they had better stay at home, where in an emergency she could order the cubs into the den and stand guard over them. Chinook, having nothing better to do, therefore decided to catch Douglas if it were possible for him to do so.

Away up in the yellow pine above the den was a great mass of sticks and moss and dried pine needles that looked as if it might be Douglas' nest. In fact, he had often seen the squirrel run into that very tree. He did not know that Douglas and his family had just built a larger nest in a taller tree, for a bear's little eyes are not so good as his nose for telling what is going on about him. Today, sure enough, Douglas ran up the trunk of the yellow pine with his cheeks stuffed full of mushroom that he meant to put away for a rainy day. Chinook scrambled after him. But Douglas, instead of going to the nest, only leapt to the limb of the neighboring spruce, and from it to a tree beyond. Chinook determined, so long as he was up there, to have a look at the nest.

Now it happened that Mrs. Rufus Tree Mouse had moved into the nest that Douglas had abandoned. The little red mouse peered with frightened eyes at the advancing cub, then with a soft "hush!" to her babies, she cuddled them up in a warm ball away inside in the innermost chamber of her new house, and waited, trembling, to see what the cub would do. Chinook, finding the nest apparently deserted, though alluring, mousy odors clung to it, decided to curl up in the crotch of a limb where he could see if Douglas came back, and so comfortably was he lodged in the hammocking crevice, and so drowsy did the stillness of the noonday warmth make him feel, that the first thing Mrs. Rufus knew, the little bear was fast asleep, right there, as it were, in her front yard.

"Dear me," she whispered to Father Tree Mouse, when he came home with a mouthful of soft lichen for the nursery walls. "Here is that bear cub, right where he can see us if we so much as peek from the door, and there

is nothing to prevent his tearing the nest to pieces and eating us all alive."

"I haven't forgotten how to run," soothed Father Tree Mouse.

"Nor I. But what about the babies? We could only take two of them with us. We'd have to leave two behind."

"That isn't what I meant," explained Father Tree Mouse, "Don't worry! The minute that monster wakes, I'll run out along that lower limb in plain sight, and he'll be so eager to catch me that he'll never look your way."

"All right, then you keep watch while I feed the babies and get them to sleep. If they keep squealing this way, they'll wake him, sure," and the little red mouse began nursing her mouselets as a cat does her kittens.

She was thinking, what a shame to have to move, just as they had lined walls and floor so daintily. The squirrel family had laid a good, firm foundation of sticks too large for

a mouse to handle, and the roof was as tight and dry as new by the time they had plastered it. From their post away up among the high interlacing branches, they could run from one tree to the next and need never go down to the ground at all if they didn't want to, for they could find all the pine twig bark and—on the tree next door, all the nice, green spruce needles that they could eat. Father Tree Mouse had been sleeping in a little shack of his own, out on the end of the branch, ever since the babies had come, from there he could see all that went on around them, and put his mate on her guard by sounding a signal squeak.

Chinook stirred in his sleep, and the little mother trembled. Would Father Tree Mouse be able to do as he had planned when that monstrous cub awoke?

CHAPTER V

MR. AND MRS. TREE MOUSE

NOW as anyone understands who knows much about meadow mice, they nest on the ground, and they are the one kind of game a bear can always count on when the roots and berries are all gone and the trout streams frozen.

Once upon a time, ever and ever so many thousands of years ago, there was a mouse who was wiser than the rest. When bears and bobcats pursued her, she took refuge in the tree tops. One night it seemed as if every creature in the woods was after her, and when she had reached the snug crotch of a high limb where she could hide from them, she decided it was wiser to stay there all night. The next morning for breakfast she sampled the bark, and to her surprise, found the flavor first rate. Then she began to ask herself why she need ever come down at all.

She trilled for her mate, for she had a sweet little birdlike voice when she sang, and they discussed the situation. They had just been thinking of building a nest where the babies would be safe when they came, and they finally decided to build it away .up high in the tree.

Those babies, after having grown up in the tree top, saw no reason why they should go back to the ground either, and they too built homes in the tree tops, so high that bears and bobcats never thought of looking for them there. Where before they had eaten grass and other things that they could find on the ground, now they nibbled bark and spruce fans, and the tender butt ends of the pine needles. That way the whole tribe came to live in trees. Their relatives who had stayed on the ground all got caught, and there were only the families of those who had become arboreal. Now their neighbors were birds and squirrels, and when they wanted to go exploring, they could run out along one branch till it crossed the branch of

another tree. In time Mother Nature changed their little furry coats from the gray-brown of the soil to the red-brown of the Oregon tree trunks, so that their enemies could not see them when they crouched along the limbs. She changed their teeth to stronger ones that could gnaw the bark more easily, and she gave them the kind of eyes that can see in the dark, because when the pretty little fellows went to feeding among the greenery, their rufous coats showed up too plainly by daylight. Finally their Great Mother found that they needed longer tails than they had on the ground, to help them keep their balance when they had to leap from branch to branch. And after Mother Nature had done all that for them, they found that they were so safe that they could build great, roomy nests in the very tree tops, where they could raise their children. Sometimes they found an abandoned squirrel's nest that made a first rate framework, and converted it into a palace of many rooms. These they carpeted beautifully

with cedar fans and bits of dry moss and lichen for the babies to creep around on. The young bachelor mice were generally satisfied with one-room cabins away out on the tips of the limbs where they could come and go as they pleased, but as the young people became more experienced in nest building, and as they found that they needed larger quarters, they would often build a whole colony of nests around some tree trunk, with the different apartments resting on different branches, but with one main hallway that ran around the trunk so that they could visit back and forth without going out of doors. As the dust blew over these nests of sticks and spruce fans, and the rain moistened the dust, and the seeds of tiny plants blew on this rich soil, the apartment house would come to look like a bit of the ground beneath, and on cold nights the thick walls would keep out the rain and the wind and make it all as snug and homelike as anything you can imagine.

That is how Mr. and Mrs. Tree Mouse

came to be living so high above the ground, in the branches of this great pine tree. They really preferred spruce, because the bark has a better flavor, and, too, because most of their friends lived in the spruce trees; but when Douglas, the squirrel, had abandoned this great, roomy nest, it had seemed like too good a bargain to let go, and they had promptly moved in.

They were really awfully frightened when they saw Chinook come scrambling so near, for they had heard him tell Douglas how he would eat him alive if he ever caught him. The pretty little red mother mouse had just gotten her four babies asleep when Chinook finished his nap, and with a yawn and a stretch, began looking about him to see where he was.

Now was the time for Father Tree Mouse to distract his attention, for any moment, the cub might start investigating the nest. With a high-pitched little squeak, the brave mite started to run along the limb just below, but he scuttled so fast that Chinook decided it

was no use trying to catch him, and just sat there blinking sleepily in the sunshine. At that, Father Tree Mouse came back, and this time he pretended to have a broken leg, which made him limp along so slowly that even Chinook might have caught him. Just barely out of reach of the little bear's barbed paw, Father Tree Mouse limped down the tree trunk and out along the limb. This time the cub ran after him so fast that Father Mouse's heart thumped with terror. But he must get that bear clear out of their tree, and at last he dropped to the ground and raced madly across an open space to another tree, with Chinook close at his heels. His ruse was working altogether too well, for the little bear all but clapped his paw on him once. He did get the tip of his long tail. But Father Tree Mouse remembered a knothole he had seen one day when out exploring, and straight for that knothole he darted, tumbling into it not an instant too soon. For a time Chinook watched the knothole for him to come out, but by and by

his mother called him, and when he came back, Father Tree Mouse had left and gone back home.

"Do you know," he told Mother Tree Mouse, "we ought to find some nice, big knothole and move into it before that bear comes back." And before another night had passed, they had found one, and moved the babies.

CHAPTER VI

MAZAMA THE MYSTERIOUS

SOMETIMES in the black of night, the cubs would be awakened by a weird, unearthly screech, but peer as they might from the mouth of their den into the shadowy woods they could never see what manner of creature it could be. When they asked Mother Brown Bear, she said it would be better for them to watch and find out for themselves. Mother Brown Bear wanted them to learn to use their wits for they were going to need them, in their life of hunting and being hunted.

Sometimes the cubs thought they saw two great round eyes gleaming at them in the moonlight, high up in the branches of a tree. Weird voice and gleaming eyes, that was their first impression of Mazama the Mysterious, whose hunting call startled every mouse till its trembling set the grasses wav-

ing and showed Mazama where it was hiding.

One night Mother Brown Bear decided to take Snookie and Chinook on a mousing expedition. Now the mice which were her favorite game were the stupid burrow mice who live in tunnels underground and often destroy whole crops for the farmers. The forest floor is threaded with these tunnels, whose entrances are hidden beneath stumps and fallen logs, or come out beneath overhanging rocks; and the moment danger threatens, into one of these tunnels they will pop, and run and run, away down underneath the sod. But a bear's sharp nose can smell a mouse even when it is hiding underground, and if he cannot catch it in the open, he can sometimes dig it out, though he has to be pretty spry, because while he is digging at one point, the mouse may be running to some other branch of his tunnel. That night Mother Brown Bear wasn't so anxious to catch mice herself as she was to teach the cubs. But though Snookie and Chinook

raced joyously after every red-backed burrow mouse they saw, till they had chased them all into their secret tunnels, they caught not one of the fleet-footed fellows.

By and by the great, round, yellow moon peeped into the pine woods. Suddenly a weird, unearthly cry shivered through the air, and the cubs shrank trembling against their mother. It was Mazama the Mysterious. "Watch, now!" whispered Mother Brown Bear. "You'll soon find out what you've been afraid of." Then across the opening between the tall tree trunks swept a gray shape as soundlessly as a shadow. It was nothing but a bird, a round-eyed Barn-Owl, though with a beak as sharp as a scimitar and great curved claws like swords. A mouse came to the door of his tunnel right beneath the huge gray bird, and feeling as if the great eyes were upon him, made a dash for a better hiding place, but with one swift dart the owl had set his beak in him and was winging his silent way to the limb of a tree, where he held the mouse down with one talon

while he ate him alive, and at the despairing squeak of his victim, every burrow mouse within earshot told himself: "Thank goodness, I'm not in *his* skin!" But because they had very little brains, they started right out into the open again to hunt their suppers, and the next thing they knew, Mazama had caught another of them. While the three bears watched, he swooped again and again on his silent wings at the mice he could see so plainly with his great round eyes. So this, thought Chinook, was what had frightened him,—only a bird! There is nothing like looking a terror straight in the face.

Just as Mother Brown Bear was ready to start for home, another terrifying sound pierced the stillness, and it was startlingly near. The sound came from behind them, and the breeze was in the wrong direction to tell them what it was. It was the screeching, catlike voice that betrayed its owner. "Is it Cougar?" trembled Snookie.

"No, come and I'll show you who it is,"

and Mother Brown Bear began circling till they could approach the newcomer with the wind in their faces. Chinook wriggled his nose inquiringly. "It's a cat, even if it isn't Cougar," he decided.

"Yes, it's a cat, but no one we need be afraid of. It's Paddy-paws, the bobcat. He's a great mouser. Better watch him: you can learn a lot from the way he goes about it," Mother Brown Bear told them softly.

"He might catch us too," shivered Snookie, clutching at her mother with both arms.

"Not now that you've grown as big as he is."

"Is he a good fighter, Mother?" asked Chinook.

"He can put up one of the best fights of any animal of his size, if his life or his kittens are in danger. But he never courts trouble, and he will leave you alone if you leave him alone."

"Huh!" sniffed Chinook. "I'll bet he

isn't any better mouser than I'm going to be."

"Don't boast," said Mother Brown Bear. "It would be better to watch and see how he does it."

"Is he a better mouser than Mazama?"

"Watch and see," was all Mother Brown Bear would tell them.

Once when the Ranger's Boy had caught a glimpse of Paddy-paws crouched along the limb of a tree, he had at first taken him for merely the largest and handsomest tiger cat he had ever seen. "Pussy, pussy!" he had called ingratiatingly, wondering how a house cat came to be in the woods.

"P-f-f-f!" had hissed Paddy-paws, leaping away to another tree. Then the Boy had seen how his tail was bobbed, and his ears pointed, and how large his paws were, and how wildly his yellow eyes gleamed.

"You're certainly not very friendly," thought the Boy, "but I suppose it's because you're afraid. You are trying to frighten me with all that hissing."

At first the cubs could only see that something moved stealthily, body held close to the ground, through the shadows of the tree trunks. Then as the big cat pounced on a mouse, they could see that he was a handsome, tawny fellow with spots on his sides. Then Mazama gave another screech.

The bobcat answered with an angry yowl. "Keep out of my hunting grounds!" he yelled at Mazama, and began sniffing about till he discovered a big mouse hole. Crouched there ready to pounce the minute its tenant showed his face, his attention was distracted by another mouse, who ran across the open, and with one leap he was upon it with a pitiless barbed paw. But Mazama had also been after that mouse, and the same instant Paddy caught it by the tail, the great owl snapped his beak in the mouse's neck.

"*Pht-t-t!*" warned Paddy-paws. "That's my mouse. Let go!" and he slapped with his free paw at the bird. Mazama gave a hoot of rage and slashed at the bobcat with

one foot as he raised his wings and sailed away, bearing the bone of contention in his beak. The cat had a red scratch down one ear. That punishing claw had come very near his face. But he also clutched a handful of owl feathers.

"How much better," pointed out Mother Brown Bear, "not to have scrapped over one miserable mouse. Now they're both hurt. And there are a million mice left to catch."

Paddy-paws ran away into the shadows, perhaps to massage, with moistened paw, the stinging scratch on his ear.

"He's feeling real scrappy tonight," laughed Chinook. "But he sure is 'some mouser.'"

CHAPTER VII

LOST IN THE FOG

AUGUST came, with its hot sun and the salt-smelling white fog from the ocean. Mother Brown Bear decided to take the cubs on a trip high among the cool mountain peaks. "You know Chinook means snow-eater," she told her son. "We must see if the name fits. When the warm West winds come in spring and melt the snow, the Indians call it the Chinook. And when the first of their tribe named himself, he took a bite of snow. They even call these big salmon that come from the sea to spawn the Chinook salmon, because every spring they swim so far up these icy streams."

"Snow would taste good today," panted the little bear, "but I thought it only came in winter."

"Away up on the high peaks," his mother

told him, "there is snow all the year around. But you are going to see even more exciting things than summer snow before we have finished our trip."

It was strange, starting out in the fog. Though the gray mist shut off all the way before him, and Chinook could hardly see a tree trunk right ahead, he could tell it was there by the message his wonderful little nose gave him. He could tell even better in this moist air than he had been able to in dry weather, and he could tell the difference between a pine tree and a spruce tree as easily as the Ranger's Boy could have told, with his eyes shut, whether they were going to have onions or cabbage for dinner.

The woods were strangely still today. The birds had little heart to sing when, for all they could see, some enemy might be creeping up behind them; for birds have to depend on their eyes more than their noses. As the cubs padded along after their mother, the scent of whose warm fur led the way, Chinook paused to sniff a delicious odor that

was new to him. Following his nose, he presently came to a swampy place where his feet sank into the moist ground and his face was brushed by tiger lilies. Now a lily means something very different to a bear from what it does to a bee or a boy. It was the onionlike bulbs at their roots that interested Mother Brown Bear's young hopeful. It was the lily he had smelled, and that made his mouth water. In another instant, without once calling to tell his mother what had become of him, he started digging them up with his claws and gobbling them down, till his furry face was streaked with mud and his sides were rounded.

After he had eaten all the lily bulbs he could possibly hold, he began to wonder if his mother and Snookie were waiting for him. More likely they had not even missed him. Now his stomach, which was used to very little besides the warm milk from which he had not yet been weaned, began hurting dreadfully. The little bear whimpered, but he didn't dare make much of a noise after

what his mother had told him about Cougar, the California lion, and his fondness for having bear cub for breakfast. On all sides Chinook could see nothing but gray fog. My, how his stomach ached! And he was lost from the great, wise mother who always knew how to make his troubles disappear. What if Cougar were hiding there in the fog, ready to pounce upon him as Paddy-paws pounced on the mice? Slowly it came to him that there was no one to come to the rescue, unless he rescued himself, and he set his wits to work. Why, of course! Why hadn't he thought before that all he had to do was to follow his own trail back to where it crossed the one his mother had left for him to follow! For a bear, like most four-footed folk, has little scent glands in his feet, and everywhere he goes, he leaves a trace of his own peculiar perfume on the ground. It isn't often strong enough for a boy to detect, but a cat, or a dog, or a bear, or a mouse can tell it easily. So around and around went the little lost bear, retracing every step

of the way he had come through the mystic maze that was the lily swamp, till at last he came out on the trail where Mother Brown Bear had left her big footprints. With a happy squeal he raced ahead. His mother was just coming back for him; but to his hurt surprise she only gave him a sound spank with her paw, and growled for him to come along, quick! But when he told her about the stomach ache, she stopped and hunted around with her nose in the fog until she had found a certain little red mushroom. "Eat that," she told him, "and you'll soon feel better."

Chinook obediently bit off the top of the toadstool, but instantly wished he hadn't, for it had the most puckery, peppery taste, not at all like those he had sampled before. He didn't want to swallow such medicine, but she insisted. Then for a few minutes he felt worse than ever. But as soon as he got over feeling seasick and the lily bulbs had come up the way they had gone down, he began to feel better. But it was a meek little

bear who promised never again to sample anything his mother had not told him to eat.

For a while the cubs raced merrily along, while Mother Brown Bear kept up a lively clip. But as they climbed more and more steeply over the canyon walls, their feet felt heavier and their breath came shorter. After a while they reached an altitude where the fog did not follow, but lay like a cloud in the canyon beneath them. Up here, above the fog belt, the sun was shining, birds were singing, and the world was bright with the green of fir trees and the pink and blue of wild flowers that had a mild sweetish taste. Puffy white clouds sailed slowly across the deep blue of the sky, and the air was so cool and bracing that the cubs forgot their fatigue and started playing tag.

Then a terrifying thing happened. The ground, which had always been so firm beneath their feet, began to rock with a sidewise motion that fairly made them dizzy. One long quiver, and the earth ceased quaking, but it was their first earthquake, and

the cubs did not know what might happen next. Their mother explained it to them.

Away down deep underground, she told them, it was not solid rock and earth, but steam from the subterranean fires that sometimes spouted out of the volcanic peaks. It was this steam that made the ground rock, out there on the Pacific Coast. Once within her memory there had been a mountain, that white-topped one they could see far ahead, that had spouted red fire into the night, for it was a volcano, and there had been an eruption. And even though that had happened a hundred miles away, it had shaken the ground so hard (there had been such a big earthquake) that the rocks had gone sliding down the mountainsides with a noise like thunder, and in some places the earth had cracked right open for ever so many feet.

"Will that ever happen again?" asked Snookie, her eyes round with awe.

"What has happened once may always happen again," was all Mother Brown Bear could tell her. "If we do have a big earth-

quake, we must run right out into the open, because it may shake our den to pieces."

Little did she dream that the day might come when the cubs would be glad to remember her advice.

CHAPTER VIII

TEAM WORK

AS the three bears crossed the shallow head of the river, whose course they had been following up the mountainsides, from the grass almost under their feet leapt what at first glimpse they took to be a mammoth mouse.

Of course they chased it. Soon they noticed that it ran very differently from the mice they had known. Instead of scuttling along on all fours, with its long tail streaming out behind, this one gave mammoth leaps, and its tail was just a bunch of brown fur. Then they noticed what long ears it had, and what broad hind feet. "It's a hare," signalled Mother Brown Bear, "a 'snowshoe rabbit.'"

The big brown hare raced so fast that it was soon out of sight; then instead of stay-

ing safely away, back it came circling, to stand on its hind legs with its long ears pointed forward to catch the sounds these strange newcomers were making, and its paws folded on its furry chest. The minute it caught sight of the pursuing cubs, it leapt away again with such great bounds that the bears again lost sight of it.

"You'd never catch it that way in a million years," Mother Brown Bear laughed, her black eyes twinkling as the cubs returned.

"Why not?" Chinook demanded. "Let's wait until it comes back, and have another try."

"I don't mind resting here a while," said Mother Brown Bear, seating herself with her back to a rock and her legs straight out in front of her, while the cubs sprawled out in the sunshine. Up here so high above their woods, where the wind was cool, the sun felt good on their fur.

"In chasing a hare," Mother Brown Bear told them, "you never want to follow right

along in its tracks, because it can generally outrun you."

"I thought you said it was a rabbit," said Snookie.

"They call this one a snowshoe rabbit," her mother explained, "but it's really a hare, a snowshoe hare. You see how broad its feet are. In winter when there is snow on the mountainsides, its wide furry feet keep it on the tops of the drifts, where an animal with slender feet sinks in. In creeping up on a hare, you can sometimes pounce the way a bobcat pounces on a mouse, but that is only possible when the wind's in your face (blowing from the hare to you) and it's curled up asleep and doesn't see you. If the wind blows from you to the hare, it gets your scent, and takes warning. Then remember, you can't make the teeniest, weeniest sound or it catches it with those great, funnel-like ears. But where a thing is hard to catch in a straightaway race for it, that is the time to try strategy, and where one pursuer cannot catch a supper that runs so fast,

it is sometimes possible for partners to work it between them. I have seen a family of bobcats bring down a 'snowshoe rabbit' by careful teamwork."

"Tell us about it," begged the cubs, who did not see the hare looking at them from behind the stump, to which it had circled in its foolish curiosity to find out more about its enemies. It was wriggling its nose this way and that, for the wind was in its face, and for the moment it was safe.

"It was a cold moonlight night," began Mother Brown Bear, "when Paddy-paws and his mate went 'rabbit' hunting and took their five half-grown kittens along. The kittens were handsome, bright-eyed little fellows anxious to learn how to do everything their parents did. Well, first Paddy himself gave chase to a big brown hare, who went hopping away so fast that the heavy cat was all out of breath before he had come anywhere near his quarry. But Mrs. Paddy-paws had stationed the kittens around every here and there through the

woods, and just as the old cat had to give it up for the time, she was right there ready to take his place. They made a regular relay race of it. When Mrs. Paddy-paws had chased the hare around in a circle and got so winded that *she* had to stop, the nearest kitten took up the race, and by that time Paddy had his breath back and cut straight across the circle to take the kitten's place. All this time, of course, the hare was getting more and more worn out, but it still kept leaping ahead so fast that it nearly got away after all. Yes, sir, it took every one of those seven cats to catch that hare. They certainly worked hard for the quick lunch that they got out of it, and they had to work harder still before they had caught enough to satisfy those hungry kittens. But teamwork finally did it."

At that, the hare, whose eyes had been nearly popping out of his head with surprise, leapt away as fast as he could go.

"Hey, Snookie," Chinook gave his sister

a resounding slap, "let's try a relay race the next time we see a hare."

"All right, but you needn't hit so hard," and Snookie landed him a biff that sent them tumbling downhill in a wrestling match.

Mother Brown Bear yawned and stretched. "Come, children," she bade them, as she rose to her feet, "we have a long way to go if we are to have supper in Rat Town."

At the word, the cubs went racing after her, and a little further on, their eyes brightened when they came to a footprint that looked almost like a squirrel's but which smelled distinctly mousy. It was the track of a mountain pack-rat. The cubs sniffed curiously. It was a part of their schooling to learn the meaning of every odor, for next year, when they had to earn their own livings, they would have to know where to find enough to eat, and then their noses would be a bigger help than eyes and ears put together.

For a few minutes they followed the trail of the pack-rat, which smelled stronger and stronger. Of a sudden, the rat himself darted off to the right. Mother Brown Bear watched to see if the cubs would profit by what she had just been telling them. Quick as thought, Snookie was after that rat. Quick as thought, Chinook saved his breath and watched to see where the race would lead, and when the rat began circling further to the right, so that the wind was in his face, Chinook made a dash across the circle and took Snookie's place. "Good work!" thought Mother Brown Bear, proud that her children were so quick to learn. For a couple of minutes Chinook raced with all his might, but the rat ran faster. Then Snookie came leaping downhill to take his place as the rat darted past her, and just as she lost her balance and went tumbling head over ears, her brother had taken a short cut and was ready to take her place; and the next thing that old rat knew, he was flattened out under Chinook's paw.

"You see," Mother Brown Bear told them, "there is nothing like team work. The reason a bear is so brainy is because he is always watching other forest folk to see what he can learn from them; and when cubs are too little to make their way alone, they want to stand by each other."

"How Mother does love to preach," thought Chinook, but he didn't dare say so, and the time was coming when he was glad to remember what she had told him. But if his nose was any judge, they were nearing the Rat Town she had promised to show them.

CHAPTER IX

RAT TOWN

THE village they were approaching looked like a toy Indian encampment, with its tiny tepees of sticks and trash.

The inhabitants were not much larger than burrow mice, were these mountain pack-rats, so-called, who scurried about packing great armfuls of twigs and leaves to make their homes secure. Some of the tepees were built as high as Chinook's head, when he stood on his hind legs, and he could have crawled inside, had the doorways been large enough. How such tiny fellows could build so high, he could not imagine till he saw half a dozen rats setting one stick in place with their squirrel-like paws.

At the approach of the three bears, the sentinel mice, who had been sitting on their roof-tops, promptly stamped a warning sig-

nal, and every rat in Rat Town scampered, terrified, into his tent.

"Hurray!" Chinook exulted. "Watch me catch them!"

"You'll not find it so easy as you might think," his mother warned him. "They have none of them lost the use of their hind legs." And indeed, the three bears had a lively time of it before Mother Brown Bear had satisfied her keen mountain appetite. Still, it was a paradise for mousers.

That same night the Ranger's Boy was having his own experience with Oregon pack-rats.

The Forest Ranger, in his horseback trips through the mountains, found it convenient to have a shelter shack in the fir woods just beneath Lookout Peak. This time the Boy had gone with his father, who had to find out how much timber up that way was ripe for cutting, for a lumber company wanted to buy some. For the first time that summer, they were to spend a couple of nights at the cabin. To their surprise, they found that a

family of little pack-rats had taken possession in their absence. The blankets were chewed and pieces torn off, presumably so that the rat babies would have a soft bed. The flour that the Ranger had left in a bag hung from the rafters so that the porcupines couldn't reach it had been spilled through a hole that the rats had chewed in one corner of the bag, for, unlike the prickly ones, the little rats had been able to run down the string as easily as so many circus acrobats. The lid had been lifted off the tea jar and the tea had been sampled, though with no great relish, for most of it had been left untouched. Even as the Boy entered the dusky doorway, he spied three of the mouse-like gray rats, no larger than chipmunks, tugging with their handlike paws at the lid of the molasses can, which appeared to fit too tightly for them to manage. The dusty paw marks up and down its sides told that they must have tried it many times. At the Boy's laugh, they ran, but they were bold, and were soon back again, working away in

the shadows that his candle lantern threw.

That night the Boy, who slept in a bunk of fir boughs opposite his father's, was awakened by a great scuffling and scurrying over floor and roof, and once by angry squeaks and squeals. Another time something warm and furry, with toe nails that tickled, ran across his forehead. A third time he was awakened by a resounding thump. It was one of his heavy hiking boots, which he had been advised to take to bed with him—for fear the rodents might have a relish for smoked-tanned moose hide smeared with neat's-foot oil. They had evidently tugged at the heavy boot until they had hauled it over the edge of the bunk. The Boy watched them with one eye half open to see what would happen next. With a huge sound of scraping over the split log floor, the three little rats dragged the boot to one corner of the cabin, and there tugged and panted in their effort to drag it into their hole. The Boy, feeling assured that that was something they could never do, and

knowing that they could never lift it to carry it away through the cabin window, and being in that optimistically drowsy state where one doesn't care much what happens anyway, allowed himself to fall asleep again.

In the morning he found the appropriated boot filled to the top with stores the little rats had sought to hide there. First there was his soap, which they had nibbled all around the edges with their pointed teeth. Next came a mixture of pine nuts, bits of the cold lunch the Ranger had brought in his saddle-bags and thrown in the cold fireplace, a button they had chewed from his sleeve, and a much-gnawed pencil, while the toe of the boot was stuffed with half a dozen burrs which they evidently treasured, and with the fragments of the greasy paper in which they had brought their breakfast bacon. As for the bacon itself, that was nowhere to be seen, though a greasy, paw-marked trail led up the side of the cabin wall and into a corner of the rafters. The tin in which they

had stowed it for safekeeping had been uncovered and thoroughly decorated with telltale footprints. The Ranger and his Boy doubled with laughter.

"Pack-rats are a pest," pronounced the Ranger, when he found his own boots, still safe at the foot of his bunk but nibbled all across the tops. "I'll take you up to an abandoned mining camp some day, where the pack-rats have taken possession of every cabin. With doors and windows boarded up so that bears and bobcats can't get in, they live there, producing about four litters a year of perhaps four to a litter, till there must be thousands of them. Where nothing larger than a weasel can get at them to keep their numbers down, it's destroyed the Balance of Nature. Some day I'd like to find the time to clear them out, or there will soon be such millions that they'll come migrating around the settlements, destroying crops and doing no end of damage."

"How are you going to 'clean them out,'

Dad? Going to take the Pied Piper along?" laughed the Boy.

"All I'll have to do, I imagine, is to destroy the old log cabins, because as soon as the hawks and owls, bears and bobcats, foxes and coyotes, and all the animals whose natural food they are, can get at them, the Balance will soon be restored. As for the Pied Piper, I don't know if these rats care for music, but thank goodness, they aren't the common Norway, disease-spreading rat of our city wharves. 'Trade rats,' campers call these little fellows, because they have a funny way of trading some of their trash for some of the food they salvage. There, just look at that!" and he reached for the butter tin, which also had been raided. It was half full of bark. "I suppose they think that kind of trade will square it with us."

"Well, they may relish bark for breakfast," sighed the Boy, "but I'd as soon have bacon and butter to go with these biscuit. Thank goodness, I put the biscuit tin under

a heavy weight last night. I thought I had placed the bacon there, too."

"You did," agreed the Ranger, "but not under a heavy enough weight. See, they lifted that hardwook stick right off! You wouldn't think they had the strength to, but I suppose it's team work."

"The brazen things!" howled the Boy, convulsed with mirth, for one rat had just peeked over the edge of the table, filched a half biscuit from his very plate and made off with it, and now sat with a fragment he had broken off eating it as he sat up squirrel-wise holding the biscuit in his paws.

"They really seem more like squirrels than rats," thought the Boy aloud. He was noticing that instead of the coarse hair and naked tails of the city rat, they had soft gray fur and snowy under sides, with tails almost as thick as a ground squirrel's.

"They aren't real rats," agreed his father, "but mice, in spite of the name. In some places they have taken to nesting in the tree tops, and in some places they bur-

row. They nest in the branches overhanging swampy places, and burrow in sandy plateaus. But up here in the higher altitudes they either live among the rocks or build tepees of trash."

"Dad, do they store food for winter?"

"Just like squirrels, and there is one thing they do that is rabbitlike. I've seen them drum an alarm on the ground with their heels when they have to send a warning signal a long distance."

"They're sure cunning rascals."

"Altogether too 'cute for me. I wouldn't mind an occasional half pound of bacon, if only they wouldn't dig up the pine seeds that I plant in my reforesting nurseries."

"They are vegetarians, mostly, aren't they?"

"Yes, and down in San Luis Potosi they sell them at the market stalls to be cooked liked rabbits. Look out! Is that your pocket knife that fellow's dragging across your bunk?"

The Boy made a dash for his property. "Can you beat it!"

But up in Rat Town they were giving Chinook a merry chase.

CHAPTER X

A LIVE SNOWBALL

THE day after they visited Rat Town, Mother Brown Bear led the cubs high above the surrounding mountain slopes to where a sandy meadow stretched to the foot of snow-clad Lookout Peak.

This eleven-thousand-foot sky-meadow was a riot of wild flowers. Yellow mimulas and purple pussy-paws carpeted the ground beneath their feet, while snowy slopes, blue in the cloud shadows, towered to the summit or swept in a long slope to the spruce woods lying dark green beneath them. The air was as fresh as a drink from a snow-fed river.

What amazed the cubs was that great swarms of red and black butterflies danced above them. Snookie and Chinook had a gay time trying to catch them. Where the

purple and white honey-lupin set their noses wriggling, the butterflies danced in a cloud. Mother Brown Bear was amazed to see butterflies in this chill altitude, for though she had been a great traveller, she had always before found them down in the warm meadows where the bees gathered the honey that she loved. She did not know that these butterflies were migrating South for the winter. But they had not come all this way to chase butterflies.

What Mother Brown Bear liked best about the summer snow fields was that here she often found whole swarms of frozen grasshoppers. To hunt for this delicacy she now called the cubs to the foot of the nearest snowbank, and while she dug and sniffed and feasted, they lapped the strange white stuff that felt so cold. Then Snookie fell down and rolled head over heels, and to Chinook's surprise, the half melted snow clung to her till she looked like a little white bear instead of a cinnamon cub. The next thing Mother Brown Bear knew, the cubs

were climbing the steep snowbanks for the sake of coasting down. Sometimes they sat with feet straight out in front of them, but oftener they threw themselves down flat on their stomachs and did it "belly bumps." Over and over and over they tried it, while their mother searched for grasshoppers, till she really began to worry for fear they might wear all their fur off. They never forgot the fun they had on their first snow slide.

Now Chinook little dreamed that the Ranger's Boy who had passed them one day was right down there in the fir woods whose pointed spires he could see from an overhanging ledge. Nor did the Boy dream that the roguish little bear was also off on a camping trip.

Chinook, having found the snow harder on the northern slope and easier to slide on, had started off with a sturdy shove of his boylike hind feet and had set himself going so far and so fast that he couldn't stop. On the warm western slope the snowbank soon

came to a stop, and there Snookie was content to coast while her mother nosed about for frozen grasshoppers. But on the northern side it sloped in an unbroken expanse of hard white that glittered in the reddening sunlight, and never stopped until it had reached in a long tongue down the gulch into the fir woods.

"What's that?" exclaimed the Ranger's Boy, as he and his father peered at a small black object darting over the snow field; but it went so fast that they couldn't make out what was coming.

Now the snow up above, where the chill winds blew, was crusted hard and firm, and the little bear, for it was he, just skimmed along as if he were on ice. But down in the gulch where the snow ran into the fir woods, the top few inches had partly melted till it was just sticky, and clung to the feet like a plaster. As Chinook reached the level stretch and tried to get to all fours, he only succeeded in turning head over heels with the momentum of his long slide. The next

thing he knew, the soft snow began sticking to him inches deep, till, by the time he had stopped rolling and come to a standstill, the Boy would have taken him for a mammoth snowball if he hadn't seen him coming.

"Dad, I want that cub!" he shouted, stripping off his coat as he ran, but clinging to the coiled lead rope he had on his arm.

"Leave him alone!" warned his father, who was leading the pack-horse; but the Boy had already thrown his coat over the struggling snowball, and the Ranger raced to his assistance.

Five minutes later a man and a boy, both scatched and bleeding but completely triumphant, had a small and frightened and very angry little bear on one end of the lead rope, with the other end tied to a fir tree.

"Now watch me make friends with him!" the Boy exulted, running to the cabin for something to feed his unexpected guest.

"I'll watch!" his father laughed, starting after the pack-horse.

The Boy searched the cabin hastily.

He turned head over heels with the momentum of the slide.

There on the top shelf stood a tightly lidded tin pail of brown sugar that the dampness had converted into one great lump. Chipping off a pocketful of hard lumps, the Boy returned to where the little bear chafed and struggled at the end of his leash. Had they not known just how to tie the knot, he would have choked himself. He was just beginning to gnaw on the rope when the Boy threw him a great hard lump of the sugar. Then he went around the corner of the cabin and peeked to see what would happen.

Chinook, finding the woods as silent as if he were the only living thing about, paused in his chewing to wriggle his nose at the delicious smelling tidbit, and suddenly he realized that he was famished. What could it be, he asked himself? Not wild honey, but something almost as good! After all, he found himself unhurt, and if that Boy came again, he thought he could hold his own in a tussle.

Gingerly he reached forth a snowy paw to draw the goody nearer, then he licked the

brown lump with an inquring pink tongue. Um! Never in all his short life had he tasted anything better. Bears have a great sweet tooth. He crunched it delightedly.

Now began an experiment that the Boy had performed with other wild folk. Would the cub be too frightened to respond? Stepping quietly into view, he held out a great handful of the tempting lumps, and the little bear sniffed longingly. But at the same time he eyed the blue-overalled biped with not a little suspicion. He remembered, however, that it was the same Boy who had passed them once before, and who had not harmed him; but then Mother Brown Bear had taught him to be wary of what he did not understand.

By and by the Boy threw him another lump of sugar. That was a language he did understand. Chinook snapped it up, and his mouth watered for more. He could smell that the Boy had more to give him. Softly, slowly and ever so unalarmingly, the Boy

came a few steps nearer, holding out the sweets, the cub watching intently. It took quite a while, for the little bear had to focus his mind so whole-heartedly on the feast before him as to forget those amazing moments when Boy and Ranger had thrown their coats over his head and fore paws and knotted the rope around his neck. But after all, Chinook had never in all his life received a hurt, and his mother was not there to sound her suspicions. Why not consider the Boy a friend? In the stillness of the mountain twilight the miracle was accomplished, and the furry woods boy allowed the human Boy to feed him.

Then from behind a fallen log not two stones' throw distant the Boy saw the massive head and shoulders of Mother Brown Bear. That might be a different story. His father saw her too, for from the high little cabin window he called: *"Quick! Inside!"* Out he drew his revolver, in case the alarmed mother should think it necessary to demolish

the cub's abductor. But the Boy ran indoors, and then both watched from the window.

"Aw, it's all right!" Chinook assured his mother, and she could tell from one sniff at his sugary face that he had been faring well. But she was still so nervous at having found him gone, and so angry at the thought that he had been captured, that—after nuzzling him all over to make sure no bones were broken—she only grunted a harsh "Come on!" to hide her fear, and led the way rapidly back into the woods, where Snookie waited. But Chinook was brought up so abruptly by his tether that his feet slid out from under him.

"Could I cut him loose?" whispered the Boy.

"No need," smiled his father, for even as they spoke, Mother Brown Bear came back to gnaw furiously at the rope, and in a moment the little bear was free.

"Now he'll wear a collar," laughed the Boy.

"Don't you believe it! His mother will

have the rest of that rope off in no time," the Ranger reassured him.

"Isn't it a shame we couldn't be friends, that little bear and I?"

"You could, if this were a National Park where bears are never hunted."

CHAPTER XI

THE INDIAN TRAPPER

WHILE on Lookout Peak, the cubs were shown the elk that Cougar hunted, and once they found his huge, cat-like footprints, which made Mother Brown Bear take the cubs hustling back to safer territory without pause for rabbit hunting.

On their return trip, she took them circling southward along a little travelled trail, till after camping for several days through the green gloom of a spruce wood, where tiny streams tinkled unseen among the dense undergrowth, and wild berries, lily roots and pine nuts spiced their diet, they came to a stand of mammoth sugar pines, with whose equally mammoth cones the cubs played football. Here they came very near pouncing on a prickly porcupine, for which, their mother told them, they would have

been sorry, for his barbed stiff hair would have hurt their paws terribly.

When it rained, they found an incense cedar, beneath whose flat, ferny yellow-green fronds they kept as dry as they would have been in their rock den. It was all a part of their education, for the more tree-learning they acquired, the better would they be able to take care of themselves and their families in the years to come.

As they got down to the lower levels, not far from the seashore, Mother Brown Bear showed them a grove of giant Redwoods (Sequoia Sempervirens), which in that moist climate were always green. The cubs felt as small as mice beside the Big Trees, up and down whose awesome trunks they climbed, exploring. These trees had been seedlings when the world was young, four thousand years ago: they were almost prehistoric monsters of the vegetable kingdom. The cubs were disappointed to find that the cones of these huge trees were the tiniest of any they had even seen. They found a hole

in a fallen log that would have made a den for a dozen bears rolled into one, and they coaxed hard to be allowed to stay there; but Mother Brown Bear, sniffing inquiringly about, found that it belonged to another bear who must have been, like themselves, off camping, and would not have allowed them to hunt in his territory.

Then vacation time was over, and they were safely back in their spruce woods, with the grove of yellow pines for neighbors. And thankful they were to see the old familiar spots, for a bear loves home, despite his vacation rambling. The soft haze of Indian summer had turned to frosty mornings when Douglas, the red squirrel, and all his tribe chattered busily garnering the pine and spruce nuts for their winter larder. Mrs. Tree Mouse had her children trained to look out for themselves, and Paddy-paws the bobcat and Mazama the mysterious owl had reduced the numbers of the red-backed burrow mice who ran squeaking across the

open. Mother Cinnamon Bear left the cubs more and more to their own devices.

One day Chinook discovered a strange footprint. It was not that of any four-footed creature, nor was it that of the Ranger and his Boy. It was that of the Indian Trapper who caught forest people for their fur. He came every winter to set traps for bears and bobcats, foxes, skunks, and other furry folk, and once Chinook came upon one of the bob kittens who cried pitifully, with her paw caught fast in a steely-smelling thing that had been hidden under the leaves and baited with a fish. And it was the last time he ever saw that kitten! After that Chinook avoided the neighborhood of that steel smell. But Snookie had yet to become trap-wise. Mother Brown Bear had been off on a trip by herself, or she could have told the cubs that the smell of steel and Indian moccasins was a danger signal.

But one day she came back, just as the two cubs had started off on a nutting expedition.

The cold rains had set in, and they were all beginning to feel sleepy, as bears do in winter, even when it isn't cold enough to make hibernating necessary. It must have been that Snookie was thinking about how nice it would be to find some snug hollow tree and curl up with her toes inside, and one paw over her nose, and sleep for a week at a time. At any rate, without once noticing where she was going, she stepped into a lynx trap. It caught her middle toe, and she gave a yell of pain.

Now it happened that Mother Bear was quite a distance back along the trail, and the Indian Trapper was not far ahead. For a time Snookie tugged and struggled to get free, while Chinook sniffed about her worriedly, his fur bristling as he detected the warning smell of steel. But though the ribbon of the breeze soon began to tell him that the Trapper was coming, he would not leave her. He could still fight.

On came the Trapper. He carried a belt axe, and when he saw the handsome brown

bear cub, he thought what a fine little fur rug her coat would make for his cabin floor. Swinging his belt axe, he was about to strike Snookie over the head. But at that psychological moment a small-sized ball of fury hurled itself at his legs. It was Chinook, and he set his sharp white teeth into the Indian's leg and clawed to such good effect that the Trapper turned his attention wholly to the bear he hadn't caught. That saved Snookie for the moment, and in just another instant Mother Brown Bear came galloping to the scene of action with such a growl of fury that the man forgot his axe and leapt for a limb of the nearest tree. He made it just in time to draw himself out of Mother Brown Bear's reach, though Chinook had clung to his leg till he found himself swinging in midair. Then while Snookie tugged agonizingly to get her toe free, Chinook and Mother Brown Bear kept watch on the trapper, the latter standing furiously on her hind legs to try to reach his feet, while Chinook growled awful threats.

Finally with one good jerk and a cry of anguish, Snookie was free of the trap, though she ran limping down the trail with her toe still in the steel teeth. With a final volley of threats, Mother Brown Bear and her son left the Trapper feeling about as bad as the cub felt with her bloody little foot—that would forever after leave a four-toed footprint.

"If it hadn't been for you," Mother Brown Bear told Chinook, "your sister would have been killed and eaten."

"Huh!" sniffed her young hopeful, "we cubs fight, but I guess we'd stand by each other when there's trouble."

CHAPTER XII

IN THE RAVEN'S NEST

THAT winter was a mild one, and though Mother Cinnamon Bear slept most of it away in the den among the rocks, she wouldn't let the cubs come with her. Ever since she had gone off on that trip without them, she had left them more and more to their own devices, till now she told them plainly that they must find themselves a place to hibernate. Snookie found another den just big enough for herself, and lined it with pine needles to make it soft and warm. Chinook preferred a hollow tree, from which hung great clusters of gray-green mistletoe with its wax-white berries. Several times they had crossed the trail of Cougar, the mountain lion, and he was glad to find a hole into which he himself could barely squeeze, and high enough above ground that Cougar

wouldn't be likely to notice it as he went by. There he would sleep for a while—say, several weeks, longer if it turned too cold—then he would sally forth for a few mice. But he found he hadn't much of an appetite when he didn't exercise.

It was not till April that the cubs learned why Mother Brown Bear had thought the old cave would be crowded.

There were two new little brown bears and a black one, and their mother wouldn't let anyone so rough as the yearling cubs come near the helpless mites. For when the new baby brothers and sister had been born, they had been no larger than long-legged, cocker-spaniel babies and not half so well clothed. Even when they were two months old they were barely strong enough to follow their mother when she went out for mushrooms.

"Huh! They're no good!" decided Snookie and Chinook. "We can have more fun by ourselves."

They couldn't remember that they too,

just a twelve-month ago, had been blind and helpless, and no end of nuisance.

It was along in May that Snookie took a notion to explore the cliff wall high above the foaming waters of the swollen river. Chinook preferred to stay down by the river spearing the salmon who came leaping over the falls and swimming upstream against the rapids to lay their eggs in the shallows, where the newly hatched fish would be safer than they would have been in the ocean.

Snookie, reaching the wind-swept edge of the canyon wall where nothing but twisted mountain pines and junipers could keep their foothold, found the dwarfed trees flattened out to leeward of the wind that blew steadily from off the broad Pacific. The little bear found that she could walk right on top of the low-flung branches, so closely were they matted from years of clinging together for mutual protection. Some of these sturdy dwarfed and ancient trees grew so low and so rooflike that Snookie

could barely stand upright under the canopy they made. It was a wonderful place to play.

A mammoth bird's nest had been tucked away in a cranny of the rocks, right on the canyon rim, and at first a great black bird sat on it. By and by Snookie saw that the great black bird was gone and that a black speck winged its way down to the river. This seemed like a good time to inspect that nest. She found five delicious tasting eggs, and she had just finished her meal and was trying to lick the egg from her chin, when the great bird came back. It was Mrs. Raven, and my, what threats and insults she did screech at Snookie! At her cries Mr. Raven, too, appeared and joined in the clamor. (And all this time their visitor was too surprised to think.) Then the mother bird was upon her, beating her with her wings. The little bear hid her eyes, but her ears were still exposed, and she gave a squeal of protest, for they would have driven her right over the canyon rim, and Snookie

had no wings. Then the father raven pecked a beakful of fur right out of the middle of her back.

Suddenly the little bear remembered the tunnels of dwarf pine trees just above, and making a blind dash for them, with the birds still beating her, she crawled under this shelter, where the ravens could not follow.

My, but she was a sore little bear! But here she was, at any rate, safe, if not altogether sound, and she told herself she knew something about ravens that Chinook hadn't learned. Besides, those eggs certainly were delicious, she comforted herself, as she curled up to sleep off her troubles.

CHAPTER XIII

CHINOOK PLAYS THE CLOWN

CHINOOK had fished till his sides were rounded with his catch, then he had curled up in a ball in a tree top and taken a nap, while Snookie was having her adventure.

When he awoke, he went for a swim in the sunny shallows, and then he was hungry again, for Chinook was growing fast. Just as the lowering sun began sending slant bars through the trees that fringed the canyon rim, he came to where the canyon floor widened into a meadow sweet with honey-lupin, shoulder high. Bees hummed among the blossoms, and it occurred to him that there might be a bee tree somewhere near by. Sure enough, a tantalizing odor came to him on the breeze. It was the work of but a few minutes to follow his nose

till he found the tree where the bees were going in and out in a black swarm.

The owners objected hotly to his discovery of their hidden stores, but they couldn't sting much through his thick fur. They really could do little harm except about his face, and with slaps of his fore paws he kept the insects away from his eyes and nose as he climbed the tree. Then a red hot fellow left a sting in his sensitive nose and several burned his ears and lips, but he had had experience of bee trees before, and he managed to keep his eyes protected. Then, oh, joy of joys, he had his head in the hollow where they kept their honey, and as he sampled it, he considered it more than worth the stings they had given him. Face and fore paws quickly became plastered with the sticky mass, and when he had made very sure he could reach no more, he backed down the tree leaving sticky paw marks all along the trunk.

Now the ground beneath was strewn with dried pine needles and fallen leaves, and

when he walked, the leaves stuck to his feet. Biting at them to see what was the matter, he got his sticky face all plastered with twigs and leaves, and trying to wipe them off with his fore paws, he only made things worse, until his eyes were too covered with leaves and he couldn't even see where he was going. Stumbling blindly about, and still slapping at the bees who seemed to want to get eaten alive, he fairly tripped over his clumsy feet, which were now twice as wide as they ought to have been. He bumped and tumbled about, and wandered around and around, now pawing at his eyes but only making more leaves stick to his lids, plastering them the tighter. It was a senseless predicament to have gotten into. Then his ears pricked to the sound of running water. Enraged bees still scrambled through his fur looking for a vulnerable spot in which to leave their stings, but Chinook was headed for that sound of running water. It would cool the feverish feeling in his nose.

Just as the little bear had begun to wonder

if he were not wandering around in some bad dream, he stumbled off the bank and went splash into a deep pool. Striking out as vigorously as if he knew just where he were going, he began circling around and around, for it was a tiny whirlpool he had fallen into. It was lucky for him it wasn't a large one. But the swift, churning water did its work on him: it washed off the honey and the clinging leaves.

As soon as Chinook could open his eyes again, he floundered out of that pool a cleansed and chastened little bear.

CHAPTER XIV

A MOUSE ON WINGS

"WHAT'S that?" whispered Snookie, as the cubs were starting out one evening in the glow of the long June sunset to explore a new part of the woods.

"A bird, of course!" Chinook told her, as an orange-winged creature that at first looked as large as a crow swooped and darted after the flying insects which were its prey. But as the cubs came nearer, they could see that the body that carried those wide wings was only the size of a sparrow's.

"It is not a bird," said Snookie. "It has no feathers."

"It's a mouse, then," guessed Chinook.

"Did you ever see a mouse fly?" asked his sister scornfully.

"Well, you see one now, don't you?"

"I don't know whether I do or not," for

by now the cubs could see that the strange creature had perfectly naked wings that looked as thin as maple leaves, and that its little body was covered with fine fur. It was Nyc-ter-is, the bat, and except that he had no particular tail, he did look more than a little like a mouse, though his face and ears were rounder. His fore arms seemed to be fast to the first half of his wings, and there three of his fingers had grown so long that they held out the rest of the wing like the ribs of an umbrella. His thumbs, which came just halfway along the upper edge of the wing, had great hooked claws on them, and Snookie wondered what they could be for. He was altogether the queerest looking small person the cubs had ever seen, as he swooped and circled after moths and crickets and mosquitoes.

Chinook made a leap to catch him and have a closer look, but quick as was the little bear, the bat was quicker. He squeaked viciously, and showed his teeth, which grated together warningly.

"You little fiend!" laughed Chinook. "Are you really threatening to bite us?"

"I'll certainly fight if I have to!" the eerie mite assured them in a high-pitched squeak that they understood as plain as bear talk, and off he darted to the limb of a tree, where hung his mate, head downward.

The cubs followed curiously. It looked as if Mrs. Red Bat had simply hung herself up by her thumbs, with her wings folded. "That's one way of taking a nap," Chinook exclaimed. "Let's try it!"

"Oh, look!" cried Snookie, "she's got four baby bats!" And sure enough, there were the wee mites, having their supper and hanging from their mother's teats.

They watched for a while. Just at dusk the mother bat flew off to get her own supper, but though they had been watching closely, the cubs could not see what she had done with her babies. There seemed to be no nest, and though they climbed the tree to find out, there was not the sign of a baby bat anywhere to be found. Then when the

cubs had forgotten all about it in the fun of chasing crickets, she suddenly swooped so near that they could plainly see her. What was their amazement to find that she still carried the four little bats clinging to her teats! They must have been heavy youngsters, too; but her wings were powerful, being so large for such a small body, and her devotion seemed to be equal to that of any other mammal.

That same June the Ranger and his Boy came, one day, upon a mother red bat hanging head downward, asleep, with her little ones, with her thumbs hooked in a low branch of a seedling yellow pine; but so still she hung, and so like the tree trunk was her orange tint, that even in full sunlight she might have escaped observation, had the Boy not been uncommonly accustomed to using his eyes. Gently he reached out a hand and lifted one of the baby bats from where it clung to its mother. It was too sleepy to protest. Its wee face looked as grotesque as that of a gnome the size of his thumb.

"Dad, do you suppose I could tame it?" the Boy asked the Ranger.

"It might die for need of its mother's milk," his father told him. "But I once tamed a half-grown bat. They make gentle pets if you treat them right, but if they consider it necessary to their safety, they can bite ferociously.

"Most of our bats migrate South about September. I have heard sailors say that they sometimes fly hundreds of miles to reach the islands of the tropics.

"These red bats, and their cousins the big hoary bats, are clean enough; but when I was down in Mexico I found a species that had the most disagreeable musky odor. They used to collect literally by the hundreds about old buildings and in church belfries and wherever they could find a dark cranny to hide in, till they simply made it impossible for people to come near. Those Mexican bats are the kind that live in caves and ruins—"

"And in Hallowe'en pictures?"

"I dare say! As they fly only in the dark, I suppose they need their scent to help take the place of sight. They go with the Gila monsters and rattle-snakes."

"What good are they, anyway?" wondered the Boy.

"People used to think them just an unmitigated pest, those smelly Mexican bats. But they do eat mosquitoes. I suppose they do their part, down in the malarial districts, in helping to exterminate the malarial mosquitoes. They certainly do devour incredible numbers of insects, so I suppose they have their place in the scheme of things.

"Be that as it may, we do have a bat, the big-eared desert bat, that is known to help the farmer, and that deserves to be protected, just as much as the insect-eating birds. But people generally kill them on sight. These nice clean red bats, too, help to keep the Balance of Nature. I have never killed one in my life."

The Boy's eyes marvelled as he gently gave the wee bat to its sleeping mother.

CHAPTER XV

THE SMUGGLER

THE Ranger had been puzzled by strange footprints he had found on the river bank. He had also been disturbed to learn that the lumbermen just over the pass were getting liquor. The lumber boss complained that in some mysterious way they were getting the forbidden stuff. There had been several serious accidents in felling the great trees because the men had been drinking. The Ranger suspected that there might be a smuggler about who was bringing rum from some point alongshore up the river, but he could find neither the man nor his cache.

This summer the Ranger had his hands full, what with the danger of forest fires, and a dozen other things. The Boy wished he might help.

It fell to Chinook to play the instrument of destiny. Sniffing around one day, he found a cave in the rocks above the river bank from which issued the most enticing odor. It was like nothing he had ever whiffed before. It smelled as if it might be good, and he meant to find it.

A few days later the Ranger's Boy, looking for human footprints along the river bank, suddenly stopped to peer, for there—in an opening between the trees—was the little bear performing the most amazing antics. The strange part of it was that the usually alert cub didn't even notice that the Boy was there.

He had a brown jug in his forepaws, and first he lay down flat on his stomach and took a long drink, then, after spilling some of it on the ground, he sat back, leaning against a stump with his legs straight out in front, as he tipped the jug with both paws. (The Boy could scarcely keep from laughing aloud, but he kept tight hold on himself, for he wanted to see more.)

When the jug seemed to have been emptied, the little bear attempted to arise and walk on his hind feet, but to the Boy who had seen similar human antics, it was plain that Chinook was intoxicated. He reeled from side to side, barely able to keep his balance, and then he fell flat on his back, still clinging to the jug, and, lying there with all fours in the air, began hoisting it about with his hind feet. He would have made a good circus clown, thought the Boy, for now he was turning somersaults, and now he was on his hind legs circling around and around with a joyous dancing step. It must have made him seasick, though we will draw the veil. But it had given the Boy an idea.

"Father!" he announced that night, "I'll bet I know where the smuggler keeps his stuff!" and he related what he had seen that afternoon. Sure enough, they found a cave next day into which the rum had been smuggled, and, lying in wait, a few days later, they caught the smuggler. But Chinook never knew why, on his return trip to the

He had the brown jug in his forepaws.

cave of tantalizing odors, the jugs were all smashed and their contents gone.

"Never mind," he thought, chasing a pine cone. "I'll bet I can find another bee tree."

CHAPTER XVI

DOUGLAS SQUIRREL HAS COMPANY

FOR several weeks the smell of wood smoke had come from the South. It was that warning smoke that had kept the Ranger ready at a moment's notice from the fire lookouts to summon a hundred helpers from the lumber camp to cut a fire trench, for in the drier woods of California raged fearful forest fires.

About that time the cubs began to notice that their woods were being visited by a number of furred and feathered folk who did not belong there. Foxes slunk along the shadows as if aware that they were in unknown territory. A prickly porcupine family, a mother and four children, came lumbering, fearless and unafraid in their protecting spines. A black and white striped skunk and her five kittens came soon after, leaving

tiny bearlike footprints, and when one of the young foxes would have pounced on the littlest kitten, the kitten turned its back and raised its plumy tail, and stamped its feet angrily, and the mother fox signalled for her son to run fast, or something terrible would happen. The skunks also were completely unafraid.

Birds flew in increasing numbers through the tree tops, a few deer came feeding in a famished manner on the ferns and bracken, and any number of brown little cottontails came gnawing hungrily at every bit of green stuff they could reach without being caught. Douglas the squirrel watched from his tree top in amazement. For it was the squirrels who came in greatest numbers—gray squirrels and red squirrels and little striped chipmunks. These fairly swarmed through the tree tops, while the smoke yellowed the stifling air and the sun glowed red all day long. The woods in which they had had their homes had burned, and while the wind for the most part came from the sea and blew

the smoke eastward, the more experienced of the four-footed folk knew that the way to escape was neither to go with the wind nor against it, but at right angles to the march of the flames.

Douglas, who had come to feel that he owned the woods around Mother Brown Bear's den, swore and scolded and barked insults at the refugees, but it didn't do him a particle of good. The best he could do was to hold his own particular spruce tree from their onslaught. The rich, nut-filled spruce cones and the great, heavy yellow pine cones on which he had feasted fat all summer, and all the huge stores of these good things that he had hidden in every hollow log and cranny of the rocks—all these riches that would have lasted him for years if left undisturbed were being appropriated by the starving hordes whose own stores had been burned.

If the cubs hadn't been so fond of nuts themselves that they really preferred them to squirrel meat, they would have had a

great time that summer, for some of the younger squirrels were not a bit cautious.

"What are all you folks coming here for, anyway?" Douglas demanded, as an old gray squirrel came running along his favorite limb.

"For something to eat," answered the old fellow wearily, cutting off a spruce cone and turning it rapidly in his paws as he cut one scale after another to lay bare the nut. "Personally, I mean to keep on till I find a certain grove of lodgepole pines that I happen to know about."

"Why, are they better than these?" Douglas demanded impudently.

"The nuts are no better, perhaps, but there are sure to be more of them. I've traveled many a weary mile since my youth, for my family has been driven by fire, or drouth and poor nut crops, to one grove after another; but never yet have I known a lodgepole not to be full of nuts; for if one year's crop has failed, there are still the crops of past years clinging to the branches. No,

sir! I never knew a grove of lodge-pole pines where there weren't nuts in abundance."

"Well, then, why didn't you move into one long ago?" Douglas was still rude.

"Why don't you move somewhere else yourself?" asked the old squirrel patiently.

"Because this is *my* tree! These are *my* woods! This is my *home!* My family and friends all live right around here. What a question to ask! Why should I move? Why should I go some place else?" he barked, his tail jerking angrily at every phrase.

"Don't you see," the old squirrel chittered mildly, "that *we* love our homes? Why, every last one of us had our own tree that no one else ever dreamed of intruding upon, except to run through the branches when it didn't seem safe on the ground. Of course we never objected to anyone running across our back yard if he had to. But no one ever dreamed of touching our stores. Why, we knew every twig and knothole, and every

place a nut was hidden. I assure you we never would have left our homes if we hadn't been driven to it. But I can see your heart has never been softened by trouble. You have had life too easy here." But Douglas was not listening. He had started down to fight and threaten and try to drive a family of half-starved refugees from some stores he had thought safely hidden along the under side of a log. Mrs. Douglas, ashamed of her mate, stayed close to her nest, though she saw her pantries being invaded. "I do hope Douglas won't give them a wrong impression about our family," she told herself.

Just then Chinook, the little brown bear, came along. "I'll eat you alive!" he challenged Douglas, and started merrily after him. By the time Douglas had thrown his pursuer off the track and returned to the scene, his stores had been raided by dozens of immigrant squirrels.

"Now I'll have to work hard all fall," Douglas complained to any who might listen, "to collect enough for winter."

"Why not?" called the old squirrel. "It isn't the way of the woods to corner more than you can eat. What right had you to those nuts, when others were starving? No one will bother your cache if you keep it down to a reasonable size, but beyond that, these woods are for all. If anything, it is you red squirrels who do the stealing from us gray squirrels."

What Douglas retorted wouldn't be fit to print.

"My!" chirped a young gray squirrel who had been down getting a quick lunch. He had been following his more experienced fellow refugee for miles. "I had the awfullest time crossing the open spaces! Did you ever see so many hawks and owls in your life?"

"That is why I always went around the long way where I could leap from one tree to another," said the old squirrel. "We didn't cross half as many open spaces as some of those young fellows who got caught."

"How ever did you know where to go?" marvelled the young squirrel.

"Oh, I always have an eye out for a possible emergency, and every time I go on a vacation ramble, I notice where there is good feeding, and then I try to make a mental map of the region. You young fellows are more agile, but you haven't had our experience, all the same. Every summer, when it gets to a time when everything is ripe and I can live off the country, I go forest-cruising, and I don't do it altogether for a good time, either."

"That brown squirrel with the orange underneath, he's a handsome fellow," ventured the young gray squirrel.

"Douglas?" The old squirrel sniffed in disgust. "I much prefer that fellow," nodding to where a big Oregon chipmunk sat on a stump and gave every passer-by a sociable "Chuck! Chuck!" He had only a few black stripes to adorn the brown of his coat.

"Why, he's the plainest chipmunk I ever

saw," said the young gray squirrel. "Not half as handsome as ours."

"All the same, I'll wager he never has a grouch like the kind your handsome Douglas has just been exhibiting. You certainly come to know squirrel nature when a big calamity like this rubs off our surface manners!"

"You certainly do, sir," agreed the young squirrel. "Here comes Douglas back again."

"To jaw us, I suppose. If I weren't so rheumatic, I'd lick him for his impudence."

"I'll lick him for you," volunteered the young squirrel, and the last thing Chinook saw, Douglas was being chased ferociously through the tree tops.

CHAPTER XVII

WAPITI

THAT fall when Snookie and Chinook went camping, they first made their way back to Lookout Peak, for a few days of coasting and chasing pack-rats and "snowshoe rabbits," then they took a ridge trail and journeyed clear over into a mountain valley where grazed a herd of elk.

These wapiti (American cousins of the European stag) were the largest deer the cubs had ever seen, and one of them had the most ferocious great wide antlers.

"I'd hate to get that bull after me," said Snookie.

"Well, you can tell his head end from a long way off," observed Chinook.

"By the antlers?"

"You can tell, when he's too far away to see his horns."

"How?"

"By his tail end. Don't you see that big light-colored patch?" referring to the rump spots they wore.

"That's right," reflected Snookie. "Look at them trailing up through the woods." For as the wind shifted and carried the herd the scent of the two bears, the wapiti had taken alarm.

"I expect they can follow each other from a long way off," reasoned Snookie, "their tail ends show up so plainly." Her mother had taught her to look for the reason in everything.

"There's always a reason," her brother agreed. "Whoof! There's Cougar!" Far away across the meadow they could see the giant cat creeping sinuously like a gray-brown shadow against the dark green of the spruce woods. Cougar had craftily come up with the wind in his nostrils, and he could smell the elk when they could not get his scent.

"He'll never dare attack them," thought

Snookie, who had been chased and wounded by a mule deer she had come too near at the rutting season.

"He won't dare come near the bull," said Chinook. "But I'll bet he'd like to catch a young cow." But though the two cubs waited, interested, till after dark, Cougar still crouched in the forest fringe. As night had fallen, nothing but the light rump patches showed where the herd was gathering to go to sleep. The cubs were mystified when, every now and then, one of these light patches would completely disappear, when in the dusk they could see no more than if the great animals had been swallowed by the earth. Then as suddenly, there they would be again. "I know," Chinook reasoned it out. "It must be when they turn around facing this way that we can't see the rump spots."

If they hadn't still been a little afraid of Cougar, yearling cubs that they were, they would have crept nearer to see what was going on over there where, for aught they

knew, the lion still crouched ready for a spring. After awhile they gave it up. As an actual fact, Cougar too had given it up, as the herd picked the very centre of the meadow in which to sleep, and the antlered bull still kept watch over his harem.

That night, after the stars came out, the cubs made their way to the head of a river they had been following, and against the quaking aspen that grew in the moist ground, they stretched as high as they could reach, and clawed the bark to show how tall they were. Chinook was slightly larger than his sister, though she fought so well that now she could always hold her own in a scrap. Soon, he decided, he wouldn't have her tagging him everywhere he went. She was always so much more cautious, so much less ready to take a chance. She took life too seriously. By another year or so he'd be staking out his own range, holding it against all comers, and perhaps finding a mate. He certainly was getting to be a big bear. He wasn't even sure if he were really

afraid of Cougar any more. Still, he'd be happier if only the great cat would go away. When he thought of his long winter sleeps, he didn't like the idea of having such a neighbor to come up on him when he wasn't looking. Cougar was so quick and agile!

Here in the boggy ground about the spring they caught a frog apiece, but they were not really hungry, for all day they had been stuffing great pawfuls of thimbleberries, elderberries, blackberries, dogwood seed and even spiny wild gooseberries, to say nothing of several kinds of nuts and roots, into their mouths. They had also had good luck with their mousing. Their sides were getting fatter and fatter. They would be well prepared for the winter cold.

After a brief nap, they started on to another mountainside to see what that was like. In these clear altitudes the stars were so many more than they had been in the moist lower slopes, and so much more brilliant, that they had no trouble whatever in finding their way. Down through the head of a

canyon, then up again they climbed, till by dawn they were once more high above timberline. Where broken slide-rock led to the snowbanks of the peaks, they began hearing a curious little noise halfway between a bark and a bleat. It was like no sound the cubs had ever heard before, and it was the hardest thing in the world to tell where it came from. Now the nasal "Eh! Eh!" seemed to sound from under their very feet, and they would begin digging gleefully. In another minute it would sound from away off to the right or the left, or at any rate it seemed to (the ruse was a bit of ventriloquism). To the cubs it was most mysterious.

When at last yellow dawn had streamed warmingly from peak to distant peak, Chinook saw a small brown ball of fur the size of a half-grown cottontail dart from the rock right before his eyes. As he had looked off over the peaks, he must have glanced straight at the creature. But it was hidden in the rock-slide before Chinook could get

over his surprise. In a few minutes it appeared on a rock higher up, but went back into some tunnel before the cubs could get into action. Its ears were too round for those of a bunny, though, and it had seemed to have no tail at all. For it was a pika, a "little chief hare," who makes hay for its winter stores and lives alone on the highest peaks, buried under feet of snow the better half of the year. It would make tender eating, if only the cubs could catch it.

Thereafter they spent several hours digging among the rocks, but always, just as they thought they surely had it cornered, the pika would squeak from some place else. Were there several pikas, or was it only one? They did not know, but when they got too hungry, they gave it up to hunt for something surer.

CHAPTER XVIII

COUGAR GOES COASTING

ON the rock-slide there had been not so much as a spear of grass to eat, and the cubs trod hungrily back to timber line.

That day they spent chasing "snowshoe rabbits," and the chase took them back to the alpine meadow where they had watched the wapiti. There the cubs took a nap beneath an upturned tree root, for now they loved to sleep by day so that they could be out all night when there was so much more going on in the woods about them.

A weird screech sounded from the dark depths of the spruces. It was Cougar! The cry came again.

The great cat must have been trying hard to startle small game out of its safe hiding, for, as the cubs drew nearer, they could hear the death scream of a hare. All night Cou-

gar hunted, while the cubs caught mice and nibbled spruce nuts just to leeward of him. At times the lion crept back to watch the wapiti, who again slept in a circle in the very centre of the open space; but with the old bull on guard with his sharp antlers Cougar kept his distance.

That night brought the first snow of the season whirling over the high country. The cubs noticed that the wapiti grazed restlessly that morning through the melting whiteness. By and by they began to gather into line, with the old bull at their head, and started off along a highway marked by the hoofs and paws of countless travellers. The trail led over the Pass into a lower valley. The cubs followed curiously, and as the wapiti got their scent the whole herd began to run.

Now Cougar, after having satisfied his appetite, had taken a cross-cut to one of his haunts so as to keep his fur dry. It was a favorite haunt because it directly overlooked all who came by on the trail from the Pass.

Just below, to the north, sloped a long snow-bank left from the winter. Stretched out in the noonday warmth of his overhanging rock ledge, where the September sun had quickly melted off the snow, with nothing but a twisted juniper to cut off his view, he snoozed with one eye half open; and his pale brown coat matched the rock so perfectly that it would have taken a sharp eye to see him.

Suddenly his ears pricked to a sound from the Pass, and his yellow eyes narrowed as through the snow-covered notch appeared the broad antlers and massive head and shoulders of the approaching bull wapiti. At the same time the wind brought him unmistakable evidence that the whole herd was following, and he could hear the approaching clap of hoof-beats on the run.

Cougar's muscles tensed as he drew his legs beneath him ready for a spring. It was the chance he had been longing for. He would wait till the old bull was safely past, and most of the cows were strung along the

narrow trail between the bull and himself. Then he would bring down his meat.

The cubs, lumbering along well to the rear of the herd, which had occasionally kicked a stone from the zigzag trail, arrived at the Pass just in time to see what happened.

Cougar, flattened till his flat head seemed a part of the flat rock itself, and even the alert old bull wouldn't have noticed him, had he looked at the overhanging ledge, waited till all the herd but one had trailed on down the mountainside. As the last young wapiti came along, Cougar leapt upon her back. The force of his spring knocked her down, which was what he had intended. But one thing he had not planned for: the new soft snow, covering the hard last winter's yield, made his own feet slip out from under him; and still gripping the wapiti, he slid down, down, down the long snowbank, which as it grew steeper and steeper finally sent him head over heels. The great cat hissed and yowled. He, for one, was not fond of coasting. Fully thirty feet below he came to

a stop when he bumped into a tree trunk.

The last the cubs saw of Cougar was the great cat disgustedly biting the snowballs from between his toes.

CHAPTER XIX

MOUNTAIN BEAVER

ABOVE the moist, ferny floor of a densely shaded mountain slope of almost tropic richness, the cubs had noticed a squirrel barking in an alder thicket.

As they approached to find out what he was barking at, their noses began telling them that here was a whole colony of creatures they had never smelled before. Soon they could see that the ground was a network of their tiny trails, together with an occasional footprint that had been left by the bobcat family.

Not a movement was made above ground, but their sharp ears could detect scufflings and scrapings from underneath their feet. At the end of a fallen log Chinook found a dump of earth where a hole large enough for a woodchuck gave off that same strange

scent. Merrily he started digging. Well, he dug and he dug and he dug! He was digging the roof from a branching tunnel, his nose telling him at every turn which way his prey was retreating. But still he dug and he dug. Several times he heard a tiny growling, and a snapping of angry teeth, but for half an hour he dug as fast as he could without once catching up with the fleeing rodent. But that only made the little bear the more determined.

Snookie, too, was digging, and he certainly didn't mean to let her catch one before he did. The tunnel dwellers smelled a bit like muskrats and a bit like bunnies, but, had they only known it, they were mountain beaver, a species like nothing else at all, but called beavers by the Indians because of their soft fur. They look more like woodchucks than anything else, because naturally all this digging had developed the most powerful shoulder muscles.

Well, that whole oozy slope was fairly honeycombed with branching tunnels, and

though the two cubs dug till they were tired, and no end covered with mud, the creatures kept escaping through their connecting runways. Somehow, it never occurred to the little bears to lie in wait at their exit holes as a bobcat might have done. They were too impatient.

Then, two feet underground, Chinook came to a great round hole almost large enough for him to have curled up in himself, and here indeed was a feast for the pair of them; for though the anxious parents had long since carried all the babies out of the nursery and dragged them to safety by the backs of their necks, opening off the nursery chamber were several clean, mud-plastered storerooms filled with fern roots, tender twigs and juicy bits of bark. Snookie remembered that she had seen several trees completely girdled by gnawing teeth. This, then, was the reason why.

After they had fed their fill, for a small sample of such hearty fare went a long way with them, the cubs gave up the chase and

climbed into a tree where they could take a nap. When they awoke, the moon had risen. Down on the ground beneath, where before had been no sign of any living thing, now scampered mountain beaver by the dozen. Some of them were sitting up squirrel-like and eating, with a root or stalk held in their handlike paws. Others were carrying great bundles of green stuff in their jaws and dropping it beside their doorways, with stems all laid neatly side by side, as if to dry it out before storing it. Still others were rapidly rebuilding their depleted tunnels. But though the cubs promptly came down and tried to have more fun, again they had the same baffling experience. They caught not one mountain beaver.

CHAPTER XX

THE BIG 'QUAKE

"HOW I wish Cougar would go somewhere else to make his home!" Chinook kept wishing as November's chill came on. "This looks like a hard winter. My fur has come in lots thicker than last year, and the squirrels have all laid in their winter stores earlier. I'll bet you anything, once we get to sleep, we won't want to wake up till spring!"

"And Cougar might get hungry before we woke," Snookie caught his thought. "I wonder! How I wonder if he really would have the courage to attack us, now that we're so big?"

"He could sneak up on us while we slept, and he'd just about have us at his mercy," her brother pointed out. "I find I can't possibly squeeze into that hole I slept in

last year. But if Cougar doesn't mind bringing down wapiti, how do we know he wouldn't tackle yearling cub?"

For all that, Snookie and Chinook soon found themselves getting so drowsy that they just couldn't keep awake much longer, Cougar or no Cougar. One feels that way when one hibernates. They had found themselves a rock den apiece near where their mother lived, and already the snow had covered her doorway, and they wouldn't have known she was there but for the steaming breath that melted a yellowed hole in the white.

"Confound that Cougar!" growled Chinook. "Why doesn't something dreadful happen to him?"

He was startled out of his first delicious snooze, a few weeks later, by feeling the rocks tremble. A low sound like distant thunder, yet that was not thunder, sounded, seemingly from deep underground.

"It's another earthquake," he told himself, as a second trembling set the smaller rocks to sliding down the gulch. Instantly

some advice his mother had once given him brought him wide awake with a snap. The rock den was not safe! He must make for the open!

Snookie too remembered, and the two cubs raced up the gulch to an open space where the great trees were still quivering. "Is it all over?" whimpered Snookie, for she still felt that dizzying sidewise motion beneath her feet.

It was not all over, for this was a big 'quake such as only comes in years. A shake heavier than before sent the rock-slide of their gulch shooting down among the fallen logs. Larger rock-slides thundered down the mountainsides. Mother Brown Bear and the little sister and brothers of that summer's raising went racing from their dens, the youngsters too scared to know which way to turn, for it was their first earthquake. One took to a tall tree, and clung there while it swayed. One started down along the rock-slide, and when, later, they found him, he lay there half buried,

cut and bleeding, and glad to pull through alive.

One of the new cubs ran out on the fallen logs, and was half buried beneath chips and branches as the whole structure shifted, then she struggled free and wisely climbed a sapling. Mother Brown Bear herself ran out into the middle of another open space.

It all took place in a good deal less time than it takes to tell it.

Then came a jerk that fairly took Chinook's feet from under him, and with a louder subterranean growling the Big 'Quake came. Dead trees came crashing down, huge boulders pounded down the mountainsides and shook the ground anew, and a slab of canyon wall was jolted loose along a fault line and went splashing into the roiling river. Then came hail in great, driving sheets, and it was over. The cubs ducked to shelter as the icy pellets struck about their ears. There was an overhanging rock ledge that had withstood the wild confusion.

When they peeked to see what had happened, they found a great crack, as deep as a sapling pine and so wide they wouldn't have ventured to leap across, where before had been level earth. It was an altered landscape in which they found themselves.

Then a comic sight struck their eyes. It was Cougar, whose den must have been shaken to pieces in all this tumult. The great cat was racing along with his tail tucked trembling between his legs, and his ears laid flat against the hail, while, to judge from the way his body hugged the earth, he was too terrified to stand. His nose was pointed down canyon towards the Coast, and at the rate he was speeding, Chinook thought it would be safe to count on his never coming back. As his own fright dissolved at the feel of the earth once more firm beneath his feet, Chinook's little black eyes began to twinkle. His wish had come true.

THE END

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